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XV.—*On Buddhism*. By G. M. TAGORE, Professor of Hindu Law at University College.

IN accordance with the request of my friend Dr. Hodgkin, I intend this evening to give you a short account of Buddhism. The subject, in itself, is so extensive that I can hardly flatter myself with the idea, that I shall be able to do justice to it. I shall, however, try my best to give you a succinct account of its origin, as well as of its propagation over the different parts of Asia ; interspersed with remarks and observations, so as to show its relative position in the history of the religions of the world.

First, with respect to the origin or the founder of Buddhism. Buddhism originated in India. The founder of Buddhism is a historical personage, known by the name of Gautama Buddha, who was born B.C. 1624, at Kapila Vastu on the borders of Nepal. The legend of his birth and actions, and of his entry into the ministry of his religion is to be found with slight variations in the traditions of China, Nepal, and Ceylon. Gautama Buddha or Sakhya Muni of the tribe of Sakhya was a descendant of the Kshetriya princes of India ; and the young prince having seen certain sights of decrepitude, disease and death, was disgusted with the pomps and vanities of life, and thereupon he entered upon his ministry of asceticism. It also appears from the legend, that an old saint of the Hindus, of the name of Kapila, was the friend and adviser of the progenitors of the founder of Buddhism. To what extent Brahmanism is derived from Buddhism, or Buddhism from Brahmanism, is a question which I shall take up in due course. All that I at present should like to remark is, that Gautama and Kapila, the founders of two distinct atheistical schools amongst the Hindu philosophers, are somehow or other connected with the legend of the origin and history of Buddhism. The Hindu saint, Kapila, is called in the records of Buddhism the Bodhisat of the age, which in its etymological signification means that he was the most intellectual man of the age.

With the connected progress of Buddhism from the time of its founder to the period of its active circulation from the province of Behar in India, or, as it is called in the old Prakriti books, Magadha, we are not acquainted. All that we can collect from history is that, many centuries before the era of Christianity, the doctrines of Buddha were enthusiastically cultivated in Behar, and that from thence, as from a centre, its teachers diffused themselves extensively throughout India and the countries to the eastward. Upwards of two thousand years ago it became the national religion of Ceylon, and of the Indian Archipelago ; and its tenets, with modifica-

tions of one kind or another, have been adopted throughout that vast area which extends from Siberia to Siam, and from the Bay of Bengal to the western shores of the Pacific Ocean. The influence that Buddhism exercises at the present day extends over at least three hundred and fifty millions of people; and it would be a curious subject for the philosopher to inquire why it is that in the order of Providence it should have been permitted to have exercised such an extensive sway, the means by which it propagated itself, the principles and doctrines by which it received its vitality so as to break through that fixity of character and immobility of disposition that seems to have been stamped upon the eastern nations from time immemorial, and lastly, its connection with the future history and progress of Christianity in the East.

From the very commencement of Buddhism as an active proselytizing religion there was a severe and protracted struggle with the religions of the Brahmins: it was carried on with a fanaticism, perseverance, and zeal, the like of which we shall in vain search for in the subsequent history of India. The protracted struggle between Brahmanism and Buddhism finally resulted in the ascendancy of the former, or Brahmanism, and the eventual expulsion of Buddhism from its native home—India, or Hindustan.

At what precise time its final overthrow in India was consummated, we cannot gather with any degree of exactitude from history; it is probable, though, in the opinion of persons who are best capable of judging upon the subject, that it took place some time between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries of the Christian era. Buddhism thus expelled from India, dispersed itself over the eastern and central parts of Asia, and became an active agent in the promotion of indigenous civilization of countries and races, wherever it travelled and betook itself to.

Thus Buddhism is found to exist in China, in Thibet, in Tartary, in Siberia, Japan, parts of India,—viz., Nepal, Guzerat, and Rajpootána,—and in Ceylon. It has established itself in these different countries with different modifications, though the general concurrence in all essential points is the same. I shall, in the sequel, follow it in its different modifications as it has established itself in all these different countries. The generic idea involved in the Buddhistic religion might be stated to be as follows:—Buddhism asserts the existence of an universally diffusive spirit, forming the original substratum of Nature. It asserts that man is the conscious modification or representative of this universal spirit. It asserts and exults in the idea of the infinite perfectibility of man, and the achievement of the highest happiness by the practice of virtuous acts; it attaches a sort of Theurgic character to moral works, and that the performance of

them exalts the individual, by a sort of spiritual manipulation, into absolute supremacy over all things material and immaterial, terrestrial and spiritual. Gautama Buddha is considered to be the highest representative of this philosophy of Buddhism. He is merely revered as a glorified remembrance, the saintly virtues of whose purity and exaltation serve as a guide and an incentive to the spiritual struggles and aspirations of mankind. Image worship did not originally form a part and parcel of this philosophy, or religion, whichever of these two terms you may like to apply to it.

It inculcates the doctrine of transmigration of souls, or as it is philosophically termed, the doctrine of metempsychosis. The result of these successive transmigrations or embodiments is to bring the soul nearer and nearer by ultimate precipitation, or in other words, by a refining process, to its original primal essence, and when it has precipitated itself into that original essence, when it has become one with it, it is said to have attained the state called *Nirvāna*, a condition between which and utter annihilation or destruction there exists this dim but metaphysical distinction:—*Nirvāna* is the exhaustion, or the ultimate precipitation or resolution, into the primal essence—that original essence which forms, according to Buddhist philosophy, the substratum of all Nature. It is not the destruction of existence; but it is the close, the putting the final period to the process of a Theurgic manipulation, or a refining process: it is not the extinction of being; it is the loss of consciousness.

It deliberately sets aside the doctrine of caste, or rather the supremacy of the twice-born, or Brahman, over the rest of mankind; it is, in fact, at the base, the apotheosis of intellect. The humblest member of this religion is sustained by the assurance that by the practice of virtue and endurance he may attain an equality with superior intelligences; and then, by a gradation peculiar to its metempsychosis, he might eventually attain an identification with the Supreme Intelligence. Buddhism then being, as I stated, an apotheosis of intellect, it extends its liberality and its toleration to other forms of religion—to other teachers of religion—and would have no objection to be associated with other religions, provided the ceremonial of those other religions did not involve the taking away of life; hence its characteristic indifference in one sense, and also its Roman toleration to different creeds and different sects.

The cosmogony of the Buddhists is more or less borrowed from the Hindus, but it does not occupy a very prominent position in their religion: their attention has been more or less directed to metaphysical distinctions, and not so much to physical inductions, or physical theories; however, the basis of their

cosmogony is the declaration of the eternity of matter, and its submission at remote intervals to destruction and reconstruction, and that the world of organic life is but the result of a natural spontaneous procession from the original primal spirit—the essence of all things,—and that it is not in any sense the product of will and design on the part of an intelligent, all-powerful Creator.

The Buddhists believe in the existence of many heavens, each differing in glory, and each allotted as temporary residences to gods, demi-gods, and divinities, as well as to men whose final precipitation into the ethereal and diffusive spirit, is but inchoate, and who shall have still to revisit the earth in successive transmigrations for their complete attainment of *Nirvāna*. They likewise believe in the existence of a hell, which they people, in common with other religions, with devils and demons, and in which the wicked undergo a sort of purgatorial imprisonment preparatory to an extended probation on earth; and their torments in that abode of fire are in proportion to their crimes and delinquencies: and although their punishment is not eternal, still the duration is long and protracted: those who have been guilty of such deadly sins as those of parricide, sacrilege, and denial of the faith, or apostasy, are doomed to the endurance of excruciating deaths and resuscitations, followed by tortures without mitigation and intermission, and apparently without any limit or end.

It gives a far greater preeminence to its code of morality than any other heathen systems past or present; and consequently its code of morality, in one, and perhaps an inferior, sense, might be said to be second only to that of Christianity. Its code is divided into major and minor moralities, numbering five in each, and they are as follows: Major—1. Not to kill; 2. Not to steal; 3. Not to commit adultery; 4. Not to tell untruths; and 5. Not to drink wine. Minor—1. Not to assume elevated seats; 2. Not to use flowers or ribbons upon the dress; 3. Not to indulge in singing, dancing, or comedies; 4. Not to wear ornaments or jewels upon the hands; and 5. Not to eat after midday or noon.

Simultaneously with the injunction of not committing the above offences, every excellence is enjoined—the forgiveness of injuries; the performance of charitable works; the giving of alms to the poor and destitute; submission to discipline; reverence to one's parents; the care of one's family; a sinless and tranquil vocation; contentment and gratitude; patient endurance under affliction; moderation in prosperity; and cheerfulness and equanimity of temper at all times. These are the virtues upon which salvation is made dependent, and not upon the practice of idle and useless ceremonies, or repeating of prayers, etc. Its worship necessarily is more an appeal to reason than an attempt to inculcate a belief through the instrumentality of rites, and the

circumstantial pomp and parade of ceremonies, and the incantation of Shibboleths.

Buddhism inculcates the doctrine of necessity, or fate; but, while it inculcates the doctrine of fate, it circumscribes to it a limited margin: neither moral delinquency, nor virtuous actions, are considered to be the invariable products of an inevitable necessity; and while the sufferings and enjoyments in this life are in some respects the consequence of merit or demerit in a previous stage of existence, still it admits to a considerable extent the freedom of man's actions, and also the mysterious influences which one man exercises upon another as units of a common humanity. The great idea that seems to admit of no modification or evasion is, that man can under no circumstances escape the consequences of his acts; that morals are in themselves productive causes, without any intervention or aid from supernatural or higher authority. It turns upside-down the great Christian doctrine that man is justified by faith, and not by works: it says man is justified by works, and not by faith. And hence you might well say that, in a manner, the doctrine of forgiveness and atonement are unknown to a considerable extent in the religion of Buddhism. I say to a considerable extent for this reason: although reward and punishment are the inevitable consequences of merit or demerit, retribution, as regards its immediate consequences, may be put off by any intermediate exhibition of virtue, or an offering or prostration to Buddha, or a firm reliance of faith in his name. The relative position that Buddha holds in the religion of Buddhism is rather difficult of solution and settlement. It may be stated to be this:—that Buddhas are beings who descend to this world, from time to time, to rescue imprisoned souls from the thralldom of Nature and finitude. These Buddhas are stated, in the Buddhistic books, to have undergone transmigrations over and over again, accumulating in each stage of existence an increased degree of merit, till, in their last or final incarnation—or rather assumption—of manhood, they attain to such a degree of purity and sublimity of thought, as to entitle them to be competent teachers and advisers of mankind in the path that leads to ultimate bliss. And after they have fulfilled their ministry they are entitled, upon their final exaltation, or *Nirvāna*, to the homage of mankind: their precepts are carefully preserved; and whether they may exist in tradition or in writing, they are cherished as the *báná*, or the word, attaching in some respects a potency and mysterious efficacy to the word *logos* in their philosophy; and the precepts of life that they preach are separated from the metaphysical doctrines with which they may have been incorporated, and are called Truth, or *Dharma*, and perhaps hold

a subordinate position to the *báná* in their doctrine. The Buddhists furthermore believe in the successive reappearance of Buddhas, and that there were twenty-four Buddhas previous to the appearance of Gautama, who is represented as the last of the series: his system is to endure 5,000 years, when it will be superseded by the appearance and preaching of another Buddha.

Buddhism inculcates the doctrine of the unity of the human race, not from a physiological point of view, *i. e.*, the origination of mankind from one common pair;—but from the psychological unity of humanity; that is to say, the oneness of the human races, not from origination, but from oneness of nature. Consequently, it gives a peculiar preeminence to the idea of humanity—humanity in its generic sense; man, as the exponent of humanity according to the Buddhistic system, occupies the loftiest position allotted to any conscious being. He is the transition point between the world of organic life and the final or the primal spirit. According to the Buddhistic system of religion, man is in this respect superior even to the gods, or the divinities, with which they people their heavens, because he is capable of an ultimate and an infinite sublimation. The gods, according to the mythology of the Buddhists, although they enjoy a life of serene blessedness, and are capable, from an inherent vitality, of enduring through many periods of this world; still, the life of the gods is a finite factor in their equation of existence, and therefore capable of perfect annihilation. But man is an infinite factor in their equation of existence: to man is allotted this world of trials and conflicts, and by a series of meritorious works, carrying with them the inevitable consequences of such meritorious works, he becomes worthy of the *Nirvána*. To the gods or divinities in their mythology these opportunities are wanting; they are debarred from the trials and conflicts to which man is subjected; they are debarred from those admonitions of the Buddhas which from time to time reappear on earth and diffuse an electric principle for the renovation of this world—the mediators of a spiritual resurrection. The gods are debarred from these advantages, and are therefore drawn away from that highest end of human life—the *Nirvána*—and become so far fettered to their individual existences as to forget the great law of progress and etherealization so solemnly inculcated in Buddhism—as to lose all extension of being, until they are followed by the execration of an inevitable extinction.

The sacred languages of the Buddhists are Pali and Prakriti, which formerly were vernacular languages of India. The priests of the Buddhistic religion, on assuming their robe and tonsure, give up all worldly occupations; they subsist on alms, not given in money, but in food; and devote themselves to meditation and the contemplation of God; and they are recognized by the laity

only as successful candidates for the *Nirvāna*; they claim the homage of the laity upon that ground, acknowledge no superior on earth, and would not even accord the ordinary courtesy of a common salutation to any but those of their own rank in religion.

I shall now follow Buddhism in its migrations to other countries and races, since its expulsion from its native home, Hindustan. At the present day it exhibits a variety of historical developments; as it has travelled into different countries it exhibits a variety of shapes: for instance, at the present day its doctrines, as cherished by the *jains* of Guzerat and Rajpootana, have undergone considerable modifications from its contiguity to Brahmanism, and thus it differs essentially in some of its points from the mysterious worship of humanity as administered by the Llamaism of Thibet; and again, both these are distinct from the theistical tendencies that it exhibits in Nepal. Its observances in Ceylon are strangely mixed with demon worship; and in Japan and China, and other countries, it has undergone stranger modifications from the existence of other religions before the advent of Buddhism. It will be my business to follow these different modifications in their due order.

First, then, with respect to Buddhism in China. It has been ascertained by judges capable of giving their opinion on the subject, that the introduction of Buddhism into China took place at a period coeval with, if not anterior to, the era of Christianity. It appears that there were three religions that preceded the introduction of Buddhism there. They were—the religion of Confucius, the religion of Fo, and that of the Taou sect; and two of these three religions seem to have maintained their ground side by side with Buddhism. It will be necessary, with a view that you might understand the peculiarities that the Buddhism of China presents, that I should give a short account of all those three religions. The religion of Confucius might be more aptly termed an ethical or a philosophical system than a religion; he inculcated the doctrines of morality with perhaps the same strictness and rigour that Gautama Buddha did; he also inculcated simply the existence of a supreme spirit, without making it one of the principal articles of his religion or philosophy. He also asserted, perhaps not with the precision that Christianity does, the doctrine of the fall of man, and the necessary connection between the sin of a father and the status of his children in this world. Although he nowhere states the doctrine of a future life beyond the grave, still he holds fast to the doctrine of a retribution in the present world, viz., that virtue meets with its reward, and vice with its punishment, in this world, and if not received during life, the good or evil consequences will result to a man's

children or grandchildren ; and it is curious that this doctrine of a personal retribution exists among the Hindus side by side with their doctrine of transmigration and final beatitude. He also inculcated a belief in the existence of demons and spirits, though he did not inculcate the doctrine of worshipping them. To each of these demons or spirits is allotted the care and guardianship of some particular dynasty or kingdom, some particular element or province of Nature. He was the author of a theory of religious despotism ; he represented the emperor as the father of his people, and in point of origination the son of heaven, and that a sort of religious worship should be paid to him.

The theory of Confucius as regards the origin of the world was as follows —He admitted an universal chaos to have existed before the separation of the heaven from the earth, and that the two energies, male and female, were evolved ; the purer influences ascended and formed the materials of the heavens, while the grosser particles subsided and precipitated themselves into the sub-adjacent earth. The combination of these two gave origin to Nature, or what would be called in the Hindu philosophy *Prakriti*, heaven being considered by them to be the father, and earth to be the mother, of all things. Thus, heaven and earth, being the two principal factors in the equation of the universe, are considered by them as the parents of all things, and that they possessed originally in themselves the two powers combined, viz., male and female. They say that one produced two—two begat four—and four increased to eight, and thus, by spontaneous multiplication, the production of all things followed. This doctrine of numbers might be said in some respects to resemble the nomad and duad of Pythagoras, of which some of the heathen philosophers spoke as the architype of the world. This idea of giving predominance to numbers became the foundation of that universal belief in astrology which exists in China.

Confucius also inculcated the doctrine of a material Trinity, called Heaven, Earth, and Man—man meaning humanity, and the exponents of that humanity are considered to be sages only. Heaven and earth, they say, produced human beings ; and the sages, by giving instruction, assist Nature in the management of the world. Of these sages, according to the belief of the Chinese, Confucius holds the most exalted position : divine worship is paid to him ; he is placed on a level with the powers of Nature ; temples are dedicated to his worship ; sacrifices of bullocks and cattle are made annually to him ; he holds, in short, the most omnipotent sway over the national spirit of China. The works of Confucius are the text-books of academies ; and the highest mandarin seeks his elevated seat by reason of a knowledge and acquaintance with the doctrines and the philosophy of Confucius.

It also appears from the Chinese tradition that he taught that the true saint will be found in the west: the truth of the existence of this prophecy I had the means of testing when I was in Calcutta; and I was satisfied from what I learnt from Commissioner Yeh, then residing in Calcutta, that it existed in their old books.

The second religion or sect that arose after that of Confucius is that of the Fohian sect. The Chinese record the birth of Fo, in the year B.C. 1027, the son of a small provincial ruler. At the age of thirty, he professed to be transfused by the deity. When he perceived his end approaching, he summoned his disciples, and confessed that he was only the disciple of a god-like man who flourished 1200 years before him; that he had hitherto spoken to them in parables, but as the period was arrived when he must part from them for ever, it became an incumbent duty to speak to them without metaphor. "Know, then," said he, "the mystery of the doctrine which my master, Omito, taught; learn that there is no other principle of things, but emptiness,—all is a vacuum,—from nothing all things proceed, and to nothing all will return: this is the end of all our hopes." The Chinese historians give a great many particulars of the life of Fo; they say that he married at an early age a princess of extreme beauty, by whom he had a son; after which he retired to the solitude of the forests, and became a god or divine man; he then propagated his doctrines, and soon made converts to his religion. His doctrines are considered by the Chinese in many respects, if not identical with, at least similar to, those of Buddhism. The religion of Fo became general, and continued in its integrity for 360 years, after which it became modified. The new religion in its modified form acknowledged a living God, who was named Taou. Hence the origin of the Taou sect, which still subsists in China. Taou means reason or intellect. They say there is no name applicable to the Supreme God but Taou, or intellect, who, himself being incorporeal, created all corporeal things; himself immovable, he originates motion; himself passionless, he is the origin of all the passions and infirmities of mankind. The morality of the sect was more or less of an Epicurean character; they exclaimed against all the vehement desires, passions, and infirmities of our nature, as destroying the repose necessary to final happiness; to be agitated with cares, to be busy about great projects, they asserted was to toil for posterity, and therefore useless; they held that we should pursue happiness with moderation, for if the soul be ruffled ever so little by the entanglements of business or the cares of life, happiness ceases, and final beatitude becomes unattainable. They believed in the divine power of the soul, and that by the exercise of an unperturbed state it

could so far gain its original power as to assume its inherent dominancy over matter. Necessarily, from the combination of this philosophic principle with the art of Theurgy, or rather that divine art which, in the opinions of the ancient philosophers, served only to advance the mind of man to the highest perfection, and render the soul pure. I say, by this combination of philosophy with the notions of this art, they were much given to the cultivation of chemistry, and were also firm believers in the philosopher's stone; they were believers, also, in the communion of the natural with the supernatural world, and hence they introduced the worship of spirits.

The Taou sect extended itself in various directions, and it existed in Thibet, and was called the sect of the mystic cross; it still subsists in China, where the members of this sect are known by the name of the worshippers of supreme reason: the priests are called doctors or clergy of reason.

How far this wave of the Taou doctrine reached India and settled itself as a secret doctrine before the upgrowth of Buddhism, we cannot trace through the dim traditions of that nation. For anything we know to the contrary, it may have commingled with existing beliefs of a similar character in India; and that, without one being traced to the other, or the other being traced to the one, they may have been merely interpenetrating each other for a long series of years as conterminous districts of thought. All that we can gather from history is, that the celebrated Chinese traveller Fahian says, in the thirty-third chapter of his work, that the doctors of reason existed in all countries and kingdoms that he visited in his travels.

The Chinese historians mention two doctors of reason having come to greet Sakya Muni, the founder of modern Buddhism, when he was a prince, and was about to assume the religious habit. Col. Sykes observes, in one of the journals of the Royal Asiatic Society, that "the emblem of the mystic cross, or as it is called in Sanskrit, *Swastika*, is found to be the initial as well as the terminal on all Buddhistic inscriptions in the Deccan, and very generally on the Buddhistic coins in the India House." There is a sect of ascetics amongst the Hindus, called Brahmacharyas, who hold the emblem of the mystic cross on their staff as the sacred emblem and Shibboleth of their sect. The fourth religion, that came in its due order, was that of Buddhism, and it has been modified more or less by the three other religions that preceded it.

I shall now dwell upon the form of Buddhism that prevails in China, and also point out its characteristic differences from other forms of Buddhism that prevail in other countries. The name of Gautama Buddha has been changed into that of Fo. In the

opinion of so great a judge as Professor Max Müller it is a corruption of a Sanskrit word. But in the opinions of other judges, the name Fo is derived from the founder of the second religion that I have adverted to in this discourse; and I am rather inclined to agree with that opinion, because, as you will discover, the Chinese Buddhism is a commixture of the Buddhism of Gautama Buddha, or rather the Hindu Buddhism, with the three other previous forms of belief, and that China received her Buddhism more by a process of assimilation than by one of adoption, I mean the adoption of a foreign religion in its entirety. The point or points wherein it differs from the orthodox or the Hindu form of Buddhism, if I may be allowed that expression, are as follows. The doctrine of *Nirvāna*, which, according to the orthodox form of Buddhism, means an absorption into the primal essence, is completely lost sight of amongst the Chinese; with them *Nirvāna* means a vacancy, a removal of ignorance, an abstraction from all material objects in order that truth may be studied in silence and solitude, so that the unfathomable point of principle which lies as the basis of all nature may be attained free from the distracting influences of sound or noise, or the conflicts of the world. With them it is a contemplation, and not an absorption—a repose of the soul, and not an actual progress towards a point; it is in a manner the worship or the apotheosis of the intellect. Although the Chinese never could attain to the metaphysical idea of a Divine Spirit, that in a diffusive way is the substratum of all nature, still they seem to hint by various allusions discovered in the works of the celebrated traveller Fahian, of a great first cause, though this idea of a first cause had never crystallized itself into a peculiar dogma like that of Brahma, as it exists amongst the Hindus, still they had a vague and an indistinct notion of it.

Although they tacitly acknowledge, in common with the other Buddhists the transmigration of souls, still they give far greater preponderance to a belief in the existence of spirits who are in a sort of communion with men; hence the worship of spirits has become one of the prevailing forms of superstition or idolatry in China. In common with the Hindus, they worship their ancestors, and at stated periods make oblations of food, water, and wine, to them, and burn gold paper to their memory.

The sacred language of the Chinese is Pali, though its cultivation as a literature has ceased for a long time. In the years gone by, or as early as the establishment of Buddhism in the Chinese kingdom, an uninterrupted intellectual intercourse was kept up between the Indians and the Chinese, and it continued uninterrupted for a long number of years; many original works of the Buddhistic religion and doctrines were translated into the Chi-

nese language, and as early as the fourth century of the Christian era the celebrated traveller Fahian visited India. To return ; humanity, as I stated, or rather the exponent of that humanity in man, is considered in orthodox Buddhism as the transition point between organic life and the primal essence. This doctrine seems to have laid such hold of the Chinese mind that it ultimately introduced the idolatrous worship of the images of Buddha to an extent that forms a contrast with its original form of worship ; for the worship of images was altogether unknown in China before the introduction of Buddhism. In some respects we may trace this idolatrous system to an ethnical law which must have considerably co-operated in its development ; the Mongolian race that inhabits China seems to have an intellect that is exceedingly moderate in its range ; it can never rise to high and complicated generalizations, but exercises itself principally upon petty details. Consequently the mind of the Chinese is exceedingly ingenious and inventive, accompanied with a keen appreciation for the useful arts and the conveniences of life, and wholly turned to material objects ; the world of ideas, in a manner, the finer spiritualism of the Hindu intellect, seems to be closed against the Chinaman. The poetry of religion is not accorded to him ; his whole philosophy and religion are therefore reduced to a code of social morals, and to the simple idolatry of material forms. Necessarily man, visible man, becomes the object of his adoration, although dis-severed from the metaphysical notion of humanity ; thus he has reduced that worship to a perfect, practical, and material idolatry, by making images of Buddha and worshipping them. The priests of Buddha in China, in common with the Buddhistic priests of other countries, are laid under the joint vows of poverty and celibacy ; they are known by the name of bonze. They live in the great temples and pagodas dedicated to Buddhas, and live upon the precarious support given by public charity ; but as begging is not a very comfortable or a lucrative source of livelihood, they are sometimes under the necessity of working at some trade for their living. Most of them also act as schoolmasters, and earn their livelihood by that means ; they are rather fast diminishing in their numbers, and they have a curious custom of recruiting their ranks by buying the children of poor families ; for instance, a bonze or priest, who is attached to a particular pagoda or temple, buys for a small sum one of the children of a poor family ; he shaves the boy's head, and appoints him his pupil, or rather his attendant ; the poor child, during the lifetime of his master, waits upon him, and then, either at his death or upon his renunciation of his order of mendicancy (for a Buddhistic priest in China might renounce his priestly habit when he chooses

to do it, and the formula for doing it is easy and simple), he succeeds him.

This custom amongst the Chinese presents many curious analogies with the Hindu law of inheritance as regards succession to the estate of an ascetic. What these analogies are, and how far they were connected with each other at one time, I shall dwell upon when I come to that subject in due order.

Sir John Davis, in his account of the Chinese, says that "they worship the Queen of Heaven, a personage evidently borrowed from the Roman Catholics," and that "the name of Jesus appears in their list of divinities." This may be cited as an instance, or rather an exemplification, of that principle of Buddhism to which I adverted in a former part of this discourse, namely, its indifference, or rather its Roman toleration to different creeds and different sects.

Furthermore, the taking away of animal life, which is considered so great a sin amongst the orthodox Buddhists, is not so considered amongst the Chinese Buddhists. They universally as a custom eat animal food, and also sacrifice animals on proper occasions. Had they been firm believers in common with orthodox Buddhists, in a first or primal essence, which in a diffusive form underlies the whole universe, they would have been more regardful of the life of the brute creation, for then they would have believed that brutes, in common with men, were the spontaneous development of that original or primal essence. The departure from that idea is photographed in the existence of a custom which is reprehended by orthodox Buddhism.

So far as I have been able to investigate into the form of Chinese Buddhism, I have now laid it before you in its perfect entirety and compass of research, and it forms by itself, when rightly judged, a separate ethnical compartment.

In the sequel of my discourses on this subject that may be delivered here or elsewhere, I intend to follow out the different modifications of Buddhism, or rather its historical developments in different countries—in Tibet, in Ceylon, in Nepal, in Burmah, in Siam, in Tartary, and in the remotest parts of Siberia. I shall endeavour to show that the Buddhism of China is widely different from that of Thibet, and that although the Llamaism of Thibet, which is its form of Buddhism, may have points of analogy and contact, still it is widely different in its contexture from the Foism of China, and it forms a centre by itself which stretches on the one side as far as Tartary, and on the other as far as the Indo-Chinese territory, and thus makes a ring fence to itself, and then leaves China and Burmah to develop their own peculiar forms of Buddhism, and crosses the ocean and reappears again in Japan, and then commingles there with the previous prevailing

form of belief, Sinthuism, or the worship of unseen spirits. Then again, with respect to Ceylon, I shall give a full account of its Buddhism lying side by side with demon worship, and contrast its atheistic tendency with the theistic in Nepal. I shall also attempt to give something like an adequate reason why Buddhism, notwithstanding its strict code of morality, favours polyandry in Ceylon and Thibet, and polygamy in China and Japan.

Then again, I shall show how amongst the Hindu Buddhists, called *Jains*, their religion, or Buddhism, has been considerably encroached upon by the religious ideas of the Hindu law, and how that law is lying side by side with their form of Buddhism, awaiting for some future co-operation. So of Burmah, where also you will trace the influence of that Hindu Law, as well as the influence it is likely to exercise at some future time.

2. I shall compare Brahmanism with Buddhism, and try to take the best of my ability to show to you that Buddhism is the root idea, the *prima stamina* of Brahmanism, and that it has only broken loose through the fetters and environments of a theocracy that originally surrounded that Brahmanical religion; and it being a question of facts and not of opinion, of induction and not of deduction, I shall give large and copious illustrations from the Institutes of Menu, in support of my views.

3. I shall dwell on the influence that Buddhism has exercised on the past religious history of Asia, viz. its connection with the religion of Zoroaster, and also with the different schools of Hindu philosophy; and that at the present day it is not lying in a dormant form, but, like an active agent, it is roaming and wandering about the earth, to and fro, and sustaining itself by different modifications amongst different nations and different sects, and that its influence might be detected even in the ideological school of the nineteenth century.

Then, furthermore, I shall attempt to project its future as far as probabilities will warrant, by tracing the influence it is likely to exercise by the interpenetration of its different forms with each other, and also by its association with prevailing beliefs existing side by side with it; of the influence that the Hindu law will finally exercise in modifying its phase, and yielding it an accession of ideas which it does not at present possess; and, finally, point out also the intermediaries which will arise between the different forms and modifications of Buddhism, and give under this general law of interpenetration, a development and progressive character to its future history.

I shall then conclude with an attempt to delineate the ultimatum, by showing that all religions are the developments of an original instinct, that they are developed under an organic or ethnical law, and that from the association of certain heteroge-

neous elements warring with and opposing each other, and therefore incapable of meeting the original requisitions of the human soul ;—they die a natural death, they expend in time the fund of vitality with which they were originally charged ; the crisis period arrives—an inbreathing of the Almighty takes place ;—Christianity is ushered in as a new order, a new creation, as the manifestation of a special law underlying the general laws which govern the organic development of our religious instinct. I shall also point out, in connection with the above point, the important feature that cosmogony forms the essential basis of all religious developments as far as we are able historically to gather or collect.

Hence the vast importance that must necessarily be attached to the Mosaic cosmogony, notwithstanding the many, and perhaps the everlasting disputes that may be raised against it, both now and hereafter, by philosophers. The Hindu cosmogony is the mythical development of the historical realism of the Mosaic, and the absence of the notion of a personal and living God in all the false religions, whereas its conservation in Judaism, in the first instance, and its further development in Christianity in the second, forms the most remarkable feature in the religious history of mankind.

If you will observe then, on the one hand, the continuity of a scheme in the Jewish and the Christian, you will, on the other hand, see the reverse. The heathen systems, howsoever philosophical, are at best convulsive and fragmentary. They form, in a word, the dynasty of confiscation and annexation, whereas Christianity—that of centralization, without the destruction of individual freedom—of order, peace, and goodwill to mankind, and the centre is restored both as regards the past and future history of mankind.

Mr. WYLIE was very glad to bear testimony to the value and excellency of Mr. Tagore's paper, which contained a great deal of information on the character and history of Buddhism. In his remarks touching that religion in China, however, the reading of the essay had suggested a few thoughts. He had spoken of three religions as chiefly prominent in the empire ; to wit, Confucianism, Buddhism, and the religion of Fo. He (Mr. W.) begged to offer a few words with regard to these. If we speak of the religion of Confucius, it must refer to the offerings that are periodically made at the shrine of the sage ; for the teachings which he has himself transmitted to posterity cannot be included under the term religion in its ordinary acceptance, being little more than an ethico-political code. Moreover, he did not profess to publish this as anything new, but constantly refers to the authority of the ancient sages—ancient in his days—whose instructions it was his aim to restore and establish. Mr. Tagore has described the religions of Buddha and Fo as two different systems, having been apparently betrayed into the error of receiving two independent descriptions of the same

faith as two actually coexistent creeds. Apart from Buddhism, the religion of Fo has no existence in China. The orthography adopted by old writers on China for the Chinese name of Buddha, has led many into this mistake. Thus we find *Fo* generally used to represent that monosyllable which modern synologies express by *Fuh* (a short *u*). In some of the southern dialects of China, the same character is pronounced *Fut* and *But*, while evidence goes to show that the ancient pronunciation of the same name was *Budh*. Thus we trace the links between *Fo* and *Budh*, or *Buddha*; but the misconception has been further eked out, by some identifying this Fo with a semi-historical personage of great celebrity in China, the renowned sage and emperor Füh-he, who is said to have flourished about three thousand years B.C. He was no founder of a religion, however; nor is he in any way connected with any of the sects in China; unless it be that he is sometimes worshipped as one of the many sages of antiquity. Fortunately there is no lack of *material* for gaining an accurate knowledge of the character and progress of Buddhism in China; for the latter is amply detailed in the national records; while the fullest particulars regarding the early doctrines and later mutations of the system, may be gathered from the translations and original works of its devotees. The number of translations of Sanscrit Buddhist works existing in the Chinese language, is something prodigious, the Hindu missionaries, having reached China several centuries before Christ, commenced their labours in that department so early as the first, and continued to the tenth century of our era; during which time something like two thousand works—and some of them very voluminous—were added to the national literature. Of almost every Buddhist work which has been found in the Sanscrit, a version exists in the Chinese language; and we have Chinese translations of which the Indian originals are lost. Here is an extensive mine for the investigator of Buddhist mysteries, and one which as yet has been very little explored. A marked difference is observable in the general features of the earlier and later productions. The former are designated the *Seou-shing* or “Lesser Conveyance” writings, and embrace the teachings of Shakya, handed down, it is said, by his immediate disciples, being principally doctrinal, and free from the wild legendary lore and marvellous incredibilities of the later *Ta-shing* or “Greater Conveyance”, as they are termed. The latter seem to have originated in Northern India or Nepaul, and, having found their way through Tibet to China, have given a cast to the religion of the latter country, which still continues to distinguish it. Among the early translations may be named that of the *Great Pradjñā pāramitā sutra*, in six hundred books. A doctrine, which has not been alluded to by Mr. Tagore, is brought prominently forward in this work, and is warmly defended by the most intelligent adherents of the cause in China, it is “the non-reality of matter”. This forms the theme of the *Kin kang king*, or “Diamond Classic”, one of the most popular of the Buddhist manuals, being a small epitome of the great work just named. The first notice we have of images in connexion with Buddhism is more than a century prior to the Christian era, when a large gilt figure is reported to have been brought over from Central Asia. In subsequent ages the practice of making such images gradually increased, and, as a consequence, the erection of temples in which to place them; until at the present day Buddhism is preeminently a huge system of image worship. The practice was alternately encouraged and proscribed by the early emperors; but at present they are merely looked down upon with contempt. Shakya appears to have transmitted his doctrine directly to his disciple Kasyapa, who thus became the first of a long line of patriarchs, who ruled supreme in all doctrinal matters. The twenty-eighth in this line, Boddhi-dharma by name, emigrated to China, in the fifth century A.D., where he became the founder of

a new line, and also of a new exposition of the old-established faith. He taught the vanity of book study, contemplation being the true means of spiritual progress. Nor was he simply a vain theorist; for he is said to have illustrated his principles by actually sitting for seven years with his face against a wall, and hence has obtained the designation of the Wall-gazing Boddhisatwa. His sect is named the *Shen-mun*, and the older teaching the *Keou-mun*. Some have thought to identify the *Shen* teaching with that of the Jains of India. It has been still further subdivided by several different schools of teaching in later ages; but at the present day the whole system shows very little vitality in China. The temples are generally dirty and dilapidated; the priests are degraded and ignorant; and those who adhere to the worship from actual conviction of its truth are few indeed. It can scarcely be said that any are sincerely attached to it; apathy is the prevailing characteristic; and it is but a rational assumption that, when Christianity with the high sanction of its divine origin is fairly set before them, it will gain the ascendancy which has been so long usurped by its unworthy rival.

The PRESIDENT. What proportion of the population has embraced Buddhism?

Mr. WYLIE. I should say Buddhism is preeminently the religion of China. Without specifying numbers, it may be said that nearly the whole mass of the people are Buddhists; while it is equally true that the same people hold to the practices of Confucianism and Taoism, and that with perfect consistency; for there is nothing to prevent the harmonious operation of these three systems; or, if there be anything in the doctrinal tenets of either that forbids coalition, it is readily foregone in favour of a listless and enervated unity.

The PRESIDENT. Have the Chinese no less than three religions?

Mr. WYLIE. Yes: if Confucianism is to be considered a religion, then the Chinese nation at large may be said to be the adherents of these three great religions; leaving minor sects out of the question as numerically unimportant.

The PRESIDENT. Are all the religions of China a species of Buddhism?

Mr. WYLIE. No: they are originally and essentially distinct. There is, however, a great similarity, to a superficial observer, between the practices of Buddhism and Taoism, the latter being a native system, which has been gradually attaining its present heterogeneous character, through a long series of ages, and has imitated to a great extent the institutions and ritual observances of Buddhism; hence the remarkable analogy which strikes one at first sight between the native religion and its foreign prototype.

The PRESIDENT. Does the worship of the Queen of Heaven belong to Taoism?

Mr. WYLIE. The Queen of Heaven is an idol worshipped principally by seafaring people, and belonged, I think, originally to an independent class of deities, probably the traditional remnant of an older religion. But Taoism, like a refuge for the destitute, has now embraced within its pale all those miscellaneous Gods which at first appear to have had no connexion with it.

The PRESIDENT. Is it true that the priests of Fo are looked down upon? If, as it has been said, they gain their living by begging, they would be despised by the Chinese, who exceedingly dislike beggars. Is it not the case, rather, that they follow some trade or secular calling, being too numerous to be supported by the mere temple services? I think a mere beggar would be looked down upon.

Mr. WYLIE. It is the case that the priests are supported to some extent by begging. It is also true that they are a degraded class, but not by any

means to the same extent as the common beggars in China, who are the most loathsome objects imaginable. Theoretically, the Buddhist priests are, or ought to be, supported by begging. Their great founder Shakya, it is said, set the example, by going through the town, pipkin in hand, to solicit food for his dinner, before delivering his immortal discourses; and inculcated the same practice on his disciples. The priests may still be seen going from house to house, collecting balls of cooked rice, which are taken to the temples, to serve as a repast for their brethren. I have seen some thousands of priests, but never knew an instance of one following a trade for his living. It is different, however, with the Taouist priests, who are nearly all engaged in secular employments.

The Shoo-king contains very little regarding religion, unless it be some slight notice respecting the worship paid to the great mountains, and a few incidental acknowledgments of the overruling power of God, sometimes spoken of under the designation *T'een*, "Heaven", and sometimes *Shang-te*, "Supreme Ruler". There are five classical works, known as the "Five kings". The *Shoo-king*, a history of the early ages of China, is probably the oldest of these in its substance, having been edited or compiled by Confucius, considerable portions being added by himself. The *Yih-king* is a book of divination, the nucleus of which consisted merely of eight trigram symbols ascribed to the ancient sage Füh-he. These were increased by his successor to the number of sixty-four, which were said to represent all nature. The first prince of the Chow dynasty, having made a study of these while a state prisoner, added a short text to each; which received a further accretion from the hand of his son, the famous Chow-king. Confucius, having added a commentary and several appendices, has handed it down to posterity as one of the sacred books. The *She-king* is a book of ancient ballads, collected and arranged by Confucius, and is known as the Book of Odes. The *Le-ke* is a book of ritual observances, which seems to have been first published in its present form about the first century of the present era. A work of the kind, from the hand of Confucius, was destroyed at the great book burning B.C. 220, and only some few fragments of it are retained in the present compilation. The last of the classics is the *Chun-tsew*, or Spring and Autumn Annals, being a history of the native country of Confucius, and the only one of the five which he wrote himself. There is not the slightest allusion to Buddhism in any of these works.

THE PRESIDENT. Can you give any information about the strange figures called *Joss*, of patriarchal forms, some of them with a devil behind?

MR. WYLIE. I do not know the exact figures alluded to, with a devil behind. *Kwan-te*, the God of War, is often represented with his black general by his side, which may perhaps be the figure intended. He was a military officer about the third century A.D., and after his death was deified for his virtues. He is the patron deity of the present dynasty of China. *Joss* is merely a corruption of the Portuguese word *Deos*, or God, and as such embraces all the worshipped images. These are various in their origin; some of them being the representatives of historical personages, such as *Kwan-te*; others are of mythological characters; while a few are merely the symbols of ideas.

THE PRESIDENT. Can you state anything about the religion of Fo or Buddh in Japan?

MR. WYLIE. My residence in Japan being of very limited duration, I had not an opportunity of investigating the religions of the country so thoroughly as I should have otherwise done. Buddhism is radically the same in that country as in China; the books they use are the same as in China, being in fact the Chinese translations of the Indian works, but they are pronounced in a dialect that would be unintelligible in any part of

China. Their festivals are also the same. They differ considerably, however, in minor details, such as the form and arrangements of the temples, being also much neater and cleaner in their general aspect. In Nagasaki there are two large Chinese Buddhist temples, which show a great contrast with those of the Japanese. In that city there are no less than six different sects or schools of Buddhism. Some of these correspond with similar sects in China; but there is one most remarkable, and I believe peculiar to Japan, in which the hierarchy are unshackled by the vows of celibacy and abstinence from meats.

Mr. HARRY PARKES confirmed Mr. Wylie's statement that the prevalent religion throughout China is a description of Buddhism, although it exists simultaneously with Confucianism and Taoism. The latitudinarianism of the Chinese on the subject of religion admits of their embracing all three creeds at one and the same time, or such portions of each as happens to accord with individual wants, opinions, or superstitions. Confucianism is certainly superior to the other two, and is held in chief respect, the Buddhism of China being a very degraded and spurious form of that religion, while Taoism, as commonly practised, appears to be little better than a system of divination and witchcraft. Confucianism has the adhesion of all the educated classes who can read and understand the classical writings; but its cold though elevated system of morality, which calls neither for prayer nor worship, and brings man into no immediate connection with the Deity, does not meet all the necessities of humanity. A want, therefore, remained to be supplied, particularly to the lower orders and unthinking classes; and these, therefore, would naturally be attracted by the outward ceremonial of Buddhism—its temples, images, offerings, etc.—which made a direct appeal to their senses. But the Chinese are too practical a people to attach themselves with earnestness to the doctrine of Nirvāna, their business habits being entirely opposed to a state of mind that has total abstraction or absorption for its object, to be attained by any such course as spending seven years of life in gazing on a wall. Celibacy, which is required by Buddhism, found no favour among a people with whom marriage is probably more universal than any other nation; nor could such a flesh-loving and omnivorous race as the Chinese be induced to observe with any degree of strictness mere moral injunctions against taking life. In Peking the Llama form of Buddhism is met with, which may be said to be more objectionable than that common in the Provinces, on account of the immoral character of the images or representations found in its temples, and which are not tolerated elsewhere. The Government, at the same time that they uphold Confucianism as the religion of the state, give their active support to Llamaism, although the worst form of idolatry that exists in the country, as a means of retaining their influence over the Mongolian tribes, and their nominal suzerainty over Thibet, where Llamaism has its head-quarters and its living Buddhas. In addition to their belief, more or less qualified, in the three systems above mentioned, the Chinese conjure up for themselves a very extensive pantheon, which varies in different localities, and includes a host of popular deities, as gods of thunder, rain, wind, fire, riches, etc., etc., and the canonized spirits of departed men or women of note. Though indifferentism is the natural result of such easiness and generality of belief, those best acquainted with Chinese theology see, in the absence of fanaticism and their readiness to give an ear to any reasonable system, a degree of receptivity which they consider favourable to the spread of Christianity when circumstances admit of this higher and brighter religion being extensively made known to them.

Mr. AMEUNEY spoke with respect to the Druses of Mount Lebanon

being like the Buddhist of Hindustan. His belief was that their religion must have been brought by them from India into Persia, and then into Egypt, where Hakem embraced it, and then into Syria, exposing their lives in battle to death. They trace their religion to India, and believe in God descending and veiling himself in the substance, and showing himself at seven epochs. They do not believe in transmigration of souls into animals, but they believe in their transmigration into lower grades of humanity until the Deity again appears on earth. But I am not aware there is any other people so near the Mediterranean who have a religion so nearly approaching to Buddhism.

MAY 6TH, 1863.

JOHN CRAWFURD, Esq., President, in the Chair.

The following presents were announced, and the thanks of the Society ordered to be returned to their respective donors :—

Dr. Knox, On the Races of Men (presented by the author) ; Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire (the Society) ; Expedition to Borneo of H.M.S. *Dido* by Captain Keppell, 2 vols. ; Malcolm's History of India, 2 vols. (two last by Mr. Crawford) ; The Future, by Luke Burke, Esq. (the author) ; The Athenæum, The Photographic Journal, The Journal of the Society of Arts (the proprietors).

XVI.—*On the Commixture of the Races of Man as affecting the Progress of Civilization (Europe).* By JOHN CRAWFURD, Esq.

THE subject which I propose to discuss in this paper, would include a large portion of the history of man ; but I must take a much narrower view of the question, and confine myself to the exposition of some general principles, adducing a few striking examples in illustration of them.

I will suppose what seems highly probable, that man, on his first appearance on earth, consisted of many distinct and independent races. In progress of time, these races, through migrations, conquests, and settlement, have often been intermixed in various proportions. The distinction between some of the un-mixed primordial races is so clear and broad, that there can be no doubt whatever about it, as in the examples of the Esquimaux, the Hottentot, the Australian, the pigmy negroes of the Andaman Islands, and the Papuans of New Guinea. In other cases the difference is so slight, whether bodily or intellectually, that it is difficult to define it by words ; and of this, the races inhabiting Europe and Hindustan are examples.

When the parties are of different races, the offspring of a con-